

JOURNAL

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Profiles

Kathryn Mihelick: On the Rise

by Rebecca Wright Phillips

Kathryn Mihelick, founder/director of the Leaven Dance Company in residence at the Kent State University Newman Center, has been a lecturer, workshop leader and performer of sacred dance nationally and in Australia, the Netherlands, and Hong Kong. She has been a vital ingredient in the growth of sacred dance in Ohio. Giving rise to the concept that dance can address spiritual, ethical, and social values, her work seeks to reflect a universal communication with God. The Leaven Dance Company's philosophy states: "With dance as our medium, we invite all people to prayer, worship, peace and justice, and a deeper commitment to God and to each other." Under Kathryn's direction The Leaven Dance Company serves both church and community. They lead movement prayer workshops with themes such as individual prayer and meditation,

learning to listen and see, and exploring God's creation. They perform for liturgy, for concert events, community outreach functions, religious seasonal celebrations and in less formal lecture-demonstration venues, always striving to reach hearts as well as minds.

Kathryn's artistry grew as she studied with such influential artists as Sarah Stackhouse of the Jose Limon Company and Bella Lewitzky. She holds a BA degree from Ohio University and an MA in Theater from Kent State University. At Kent State she was the dance coordinator of the dance major program and an assistant professor teaching modern technique, ballet, dance improvisation and composition, dance history, and other courses.

Continually rising, Kathryn was one of five dancers receiving a grant from the Asian Arts Council to introduce sacred dance into the Hong Kong International Dance Research Conference in 1991. She has received several grants and recently developed a video series on "Sacred and Ritual Dance History" for the Seminary of the Air program sponsored by the Akron Area Association of Churches.

Dedication to raising the audience's expectations, their understanding of the value of sacred dance, and working to lift the spirits of those who participate in or see the Leaven Dance Company's work is Kathryn's mission. After interacting with the company, Reverend Sue Smith states, "I felt every moment spent together...was a

wonderful spiritual retreat." And after performing Helen Tamiris' suite, "Negro Spirituals," at the Marion Ohio Correctional Institution, one of the company's dancers wrote, "I don't know what it did for anyone else, but for me it was a healing experience. I came to realize that I am no longer a prisoner of my past and that when I walk with the Lord, I walk in freedom." Embodying the idea of the purpose of the leaven, Kathryn and her company are truly providing others with the opportunity to rise closer to God through their art and their dance ministry.

Maragaret Taylor Doane: Dancing the Journey

by Rebecca Wright Phillips

Author, dancer, teacher, artist.

Margaret Taylor Doane continues to dance her life's journey. She began dancing as a fairy with wings in 1915 and continued dancing as a child in Hawai'i, later at Oberlin College, Ohio, and at the Wigman School of Dance in Berlin, Germany. Her journey moved her to work with dance choirs in Hanover, New Hampshire and toward publishing her works in Tacoma,

Washington. While dancing with Ohio University students in the '60s she created inter-faith programs with an inter-racial ecumenical group and led workshops around the country.

She has held workshops combined with vespers in over 3,000 churches of all denominations both here in the United States and in Japan. She is the author of seven books dealing with such topics as symbolic movement in worship, creative movement, and dramatic dance for children. Her service to the Sacred Dance Guild as president and as a board member has been yet another part of her creative journey.

As any true pioneer Margaret has left beauty along the trail for all who follow in her path. Her humbly stated purpose is to encourage others to use creative dramatic action as a meaningful way to grow in Christian faith with group involvement in joy, compassion, and resiliency. Involving the whole person in body, mind and soul is her goal. Through her own personal roadblocks of divorce, deaths of spouses, and the loss of a daughter, sacred dance was always a "release and empowerment" for her allowing her to find the strength to go on. About her journey she states, *"I never planned ahead; I just enjoyed sharing ideas for more awareness of God's presence, more resilience in meeting pressures, more appreciation of others and more enjoyment of dancing meaningfully. Because I cherish mystical and spiritual awareness, and because I love people, I have continued my journey sharing my very simple dancing."* (Editor's Note: What a treasure we have in Margaret Taylor Doane!)

Calendar

July 11-16 & June 20-25, 1999 - Contemplative Dance, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA. Contact: Prof. Daphne Lowell, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA 01002.

July 12-17, 1999 - Art Reach Proclaiming Jesus Through the Arts Seminar & Outreach. Contact: 713-626-4542.

July 19-22, 1999 - International Sacred Dance Guild Festival '99, Cleveland State University. Contact: Ann Zahradnik, 440-944-2278.

July 21-July 25, 1999 - Liturgy with JoAnne Tucker, UAHC Kallah, Santa Cruz. Contact: UAHC 212-249-0100 Department of Adult Study to register.

July 22-25, 1999 - Phoenix Performing Arts Ministries Conference, Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester, NY. JoAn Huff, dance presenter. Contact: Ginny Williams 1-800-408-6245, Ext. 107.

July 26-30, 1999 - "Creating Sacred Dance" with Carla DeSola. Contact: Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709. (Note: There will also be a dance week before and after the above July 19-22 and August 6-10.)

August, 1999 - "Traditions of Sacred Dance" workshop include free public concert. Contact: www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/sdgh or Ruth Marie, 808-395-7524 or rmq@hawaii.edu.

October 16-18, 1999 - "Coming Forth by Day", Mandel Hall, University of Chicago. Contact: Moving Company, Hamlin Park, 3035 N. Hoyne, Chicago, IL 60618.

November 4-7, 1999 - American Dance Therapy Association's National Conference "Mosaic of the New Millenium", Chicago, IL. Contact: Gail Ann Bradshaw 847-869-8695.

November, 1999 - "Authentic Movement" with Mary Francis Hopkins of St. Louis. Contact: www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/sdgh or Ruth Marie, 808-395-7524 or rmq@hawaii.edu.



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